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THE WAY TO RUIN.

## STRUGGLES IN LIFE.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

GLIMPSES BEHIND THE SCENES.

SEVERAL weeks passed away without any particular changes. Minnie and her father were still

at their country lodgings, reaping the full benefit of fresh air and plenty of leisure, in renovated health and spirits. They were not so far from London that Basil could not occasionally pay them a visit. Every Saturday evening, in fact, he might

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have been seen walking along Shoreditch and the Hackney road, and, some three hours afterwards, springing over the stile which separated the Epping forest farm-meadow from the London road. The evenings were long, and Basil preferred walking; it was cheaper and almost as expeditious as the rumbling old coach which started from Bishopsgate-street a few minutes after Basil, and passed the said stile some half hour only before him. Those Saturday evening walks, and the quiet Sundays which followed, were pleasant resting-places in Basil's memory ever after.

The subject of Arthur Kemp's conversation with Basil, as detailed in our last chapter, was not for some time renewed. Basil was glad of this: he hoped that Arthur had been convinced by his arguments. He noticed, indeed, that Arthur was at times dull and unusually taciturn; but he trusted that in time he would forget, or think better of, his ridiculous fancy (so Basil irreverently called it) for Minnie, and come round again.

He was mistaken in this, however.

"You have been writing to Minnie, I find," said Basil, one day, on his return to London after one of his weekly visits to the farm. "I don't think that was quite fair after what has passed between us."

"Oh, nonsense, Basil; everything is fair in love. You said you would not help me, you know, and you can't blame me for helping myself, or trying. 'Faint heart never won fair lady.' Come, now, don't look so glum. It is I that ought to put on a long face, not you. You have got my sentence, I suppose. What is it—'To be, or not to be?'"

"It is just what I could have told you would be," said Basil. "My sister sincerely thanks you for your favourable opinion of her; but—"

"Oh, don't give me any 'buts,' Marsden. Haven't you a letter for me?" asked Arthur in a tone of affected nonchalance.

"Certainly not. Minnie gave me a message; and if it is not such as you wish, it is such as you ought to have expected. She considers herself too young to enter into any engagement of the sort; and trusts that you will not renew the subject of your letter, which would only give her pain."

"And this is her answer, is it, Basil? all her answer?" asked Arthur. Steadily he tried to speak, but he failed. "Was there nothing more?"

"Nothing."

"Now, tell me, Marsden," demanded the mortified and rejected suitor, almost angrily—"didn't you put Minnie up to this? Isn't it your doing?"

"I don't think you ought to ask me such a question," replied Basil, calmly; "but I will answer it honestly. If Minnie had asked my advice I would have given it; and from what passed between us, not long ago, you may suppose what that advice would have been: but she did not ask it, and I am glad she did not. I have given you her unbiased reply in her own words."

"It is all very well," said Arthur, sullenly, and after a short silence, "I think you might have given me a lift; you could have done it if you would; but I shan't have my back broken with the obligation that's all. And if" he added bitterly,

"if after this you see me going to the bad in my own way, don't you interfere—that's all."

"I am sorry if your mind is hurt, Arthur," Basil answered, soothingly. "Don't say any more about it now; you will think differently soon."

Arthur Kemp turned moodily away, and Basil soon afterwards left the counting-house. It was past the hour of closing, and Arthur was about to lock his desk, when he felt a hand laid upon his arm. Looking round, he perceived that Mr. Gillman was at his elbow, with a sneer on his countenance.

"So! you have got your change out of that, have you Kemp?" he said, softly.

"You don't mean to say you heard what passed, Mr. Gillman?" retorted Arthur, angrily. "I thought you were in Mr. Rutland's room."

"So I was in Mr. Rutland's room; but if you choose to talk so loud, I can but choose to hear. The door was partly open. But you need not look so blank; I did not hear any treason. Come, pluck up."

"Oh yes, it is very easy to say 'pluck up,' Mr. Gillman; but if you heard what passed you might know it is not so easy to do it."

"Why not? Because you have been jilted by a whey-faced girl, is that any reason why you should hang your head down? Now, I say it is the best thing that could have happened to you. What could you be thinking about? But come, never mind about that now. You must go with me to-night, and you'll be another man to-morrow."

"I don't care where I go," said Arthur, passionately; "as well to-night as any other. But you know what you are making of me, Gillman."

"I know I have been trying to make a man of you a good while," retorted Mr. Gillman, contemptuously; "but I begin to think that I am a fool for my pains."

"You can leave me alone if you don't like it," muttered Arthur.

"But I am not going to leave you alone," returned Gillman, coolly. "By the way," he added, in quite a different tone from that in which he had before spoken, "I had a run of most awful bad luck last night at—you know where."

"I suppose I can guess," said Kemp, still sullenly; "and not the first time either, Mr. Gillman, sharp as they say you are."

"They say so, do they?" said Mr. Gillman, laughing. "Never mind. What petty cash have you in hand, Mr. Kemp?" This question he put in a lower key.

"Why do you want to know that, Mr. Gillman?" asked Arthur in a tone which sounded like a feeble remonstrance.

"Just because, whatever it is, I must borrow it to-night," said the other, calmly.

"I can't think," rejoined Arthur, almost beseechingly, "why you should come to me in this way, when you have the key of the iron chest, Mr. Gillman. I wish you would not."

"I'll tell you why I do it, Kemp," retorted the senior clerk, speaking slowly and emphatically. "I have told you before, and I'll tell you again. It is to keep you in mind that I have only to hold

up my little finger and down you go—down—down. And now you understand me.”

“You take an ungenerous advantage of me, Mr. Gillman,” said the guilty youth, whose lips had turned to an ashy paleness. “You know your power, and you use it too hardly. But you must do as you like;” and with trembling hands he unlocked the iron-plated closet—not the iron chest of which he had spoken—in which the petty cash box, of which he was keeper, was deposited.

It is the quaint but beautiful imagery of the Germans to picture conscience as the angel with the little hammer, which knocks to warn and remonstrate when some wrong is about to be perpetrated. The angel knocked now in Arthur's heart; but, alas! alas! in vain.

There was a rattling of money, and then the shutting-to of the door and the sharp click of the lock, before another word was uttered. At length Arthur spoke again, and his voice was husky.

“We shall be found out some of these days, Mr. Gillman. If Mr. Rutland should come in to-morrow, unexpectedly, as he did once before, and my cash shouldn't be right——”

“And who got you off that ‘once before,’ when you could not help yourself, Kemp? and threw dust in the governor's eyes to keep you from being even suspected? Pho, pho! you knew how to *borrow* on your own account; and now you pretend to have qualms of conscience. I want you to know that we are in the same boat, my friend, that's all. Remember that there are other little matters besides that ‘once before’ that you speak of.”

“I know it, Mr. Gillman,” groaned the young man; “you need not be always reminding me of it. I only said if Mr. Rutland should pop in to-morrow, and my cash box should be empty——”

“Nonsense; it will be filled again: and if it is not, I'll contrive that he does not overhaul your accounts. Besides, most scrupulous Arthur, Mr. Rutland will not pop in to-morrow, nor the next day, nor the next day after that. He is now in Paris, or was when he wrote the letter that came this morning, and was going on to Lyons; so we are not likely to be favoured with his company for another week at the earliest.”

“So much the better, then,” muttered Kemp; and there the conference for that time ended.

We shift the scene to a large room, or rather a suite of rooms, in a house westward of Temple-bar, in a street out of the range of the public thoroughfares. The time was near upon midnight; and the room was brilliantly lighted, and noisy with the sound of many voices. The night's performances at the theatre were over; and from pit, boxes, and gallery, tumultuous groups had retired “to make out the night” in various haunts of dissipation and vice, from one of which, with a cautious hand, we venture timidly to draw back one corner of the curtain.

To all outward appearance, the house was as quiet and as wrapt in dull repose as its neighbours in the street; and the company, as they cautiously lounged in at the doorway, in ones or twos, were suspiciously scrutinized by a man who kept watch and ward ere they were admitted. As they ascended the stairs, a strong door barred further progress, until, at a given signal, it was opened

from above; and not till then could the revelry and confused babbling of tongues be distinctly heard.

The rooms were stiflingly warm; for the time was summer, and the flaring of gas added to the oppressive heat of the night, while the windows were fast closed with shutters and thickly curtained. The only ventilation was by the open doors, and an open trap in the ceiling, which probably communicated with the roof of the house, and gave exit to some portion of the vitiated air engendered below.

There were, as we have said, many in the rooms. There were grey-headed sinners, with vice broadly marked on the countenance, and licentiousness glaring from glassy eyes. There were young men with boastful profligacy of speech and manner. The place was a gaming-house; and the keeper was a German, who had learned many of the secrets of his profession in Paris, and was reaping a plentiful harvest of illegal gain in London.

Wine was flowing freely, and, mingling with conversation mostly interjectional, were heard the rolling of ivory balls, the rattling of dice, and the rapid shuffling of cards.

There were a variety of tables, adapted for the different forms of play. Around some were seated keen-eyed card-players; and the loose scattered cards on the floor around them showed that pack after pack had been used and cast away. They had probably been thus occupied some two or three hours, and no signs of weariness were discernible in their sharp countenances, but many of passion, triumph, despondency, desperation, fierce wrath, and reckless self-abandonment. At another table might be seen another kind of game in full activity, and by this table stood the infatuated youth, Arthur Kemp, and his tempter Gillman.

With whatever reluctance Arthur had commenced the dissipation of this evening, no trace of it remained on his countenance now. From the counting-house the two clerks had hastened to the theatre; from the theatre they had adjourned to a tavern; and from the tavern they had proceeded to the gaming-house, where Gillman, at least, was sufficiently well known to gain ready admittance.

The difference between the two clerks, as they stood watching the chances of the game on which they had each a stake depending, was striking. Gillman was apparently calm and unconcerned. A slight compression of the lips, and a rigidity of the muscles of his face, which did not however banish his habitual sneer, might have been observed; but this was all. He was perfectly sober, too. He had drank but sparingly at the tavern; here, in spite of frequent invitations to take wine, he drank nothing but water, slightly diluted. On the other hand, Arthur was flushed with semi-intoxication, which he continually increased by glass after glass to steady his nerves, as he said, when remonstrated with by his cooler and more wary companion.

As the fate of the game, and his fate for that evening, at length trembled on the balance, his whole soul seemed kindled into excitement; and when the cast was made which consigned his last guinea—how obtained he and Gillman best knew—to the heap which lay at the elbow of the proprietor of the table, he uttered a hasty imprecation on his “bad luck,” and, throwing himself upon

a sofa, clenched his hands in fierce and bitter agony.

How rapid the changes which, during the last half-hour, had passed over his countenance! Then, exultation and ardent expectation; now, wrath and despair!

And this, this dissolute roysterer, this miserable gamester, a son on whom a parent's hope had been centred! And he had dared to fix his thoughts on one to whom the very shadow of vice like this would have been a withering blight! Had Minnie Marsden seen him now; could she have traced her rejected lover from one scene of dissipation to another, and watched him in the varying moods of passion which passed over his features till they settled down at last in grim and abject desperation, how might she not, in the midst of her compassion for the castaway, have uttered the language of grateful adoration: "My soul is escaped as a bird out of the snare of the fowlers: the snare is broken, and I am escaped!"

The same stroke, or chance—call it what you will—which had been so adverse to Arthur, had proved successful to his companion, who, pocketing his gains, quitted the table, and seated himself beside the baffled gamester.

"What now?" demanded Arthur, fiercely accosting his leader.

"You silly fellow—why did you not follow my lead?" commenced Gillman. "Did you not see my hint?"

"I don't know why I should always be taking your hints, Gillman," returned Arthur, who was sufficiently inclined to be quarrelsome, and was not sorry, perhaps, to have a subject presented to him on which to ground a dispute. "There's no occasion, that I know of, for you to set yourself up to dictate to me in this way. You don't always have luck on your side, do you?"

"No, not always," replied the head clerk, coolly and still guardedly: "and you need not talk so loud as to bring the eyes of all the rascals upon us. But you know that, if I don't always win, I know a thing or two more than you do. However, you can take your chance, of course; only don't say that it is my fault."

"Well, since you have won," said Arthur, sullenly, "let me have a share in your winnings, and a chance of winning back again what I have lost. You had better by half do that than sit here preaching to me, which I am not going to stand."

"And I," said Gillman, "am not going to let you risk any more to night. You are not fit for it, my good fellow: you have been drinking too much; and that is another thing that I have got to say to you—"

"And I say I won't hear it then," returned Arthur, fiercely.

"Very well; there is one thing, however, that you may hear if you will—and that is the clock striking twelve. It is time you were on your way home, if it were only to sleep off your sulkingness. Come, come," he added, in a more soothing tone; "you know that this is very foolish. We shall be able to find our way here again; and then—"

"And you won't let me go on any longer to-night?" said Arthur.

"Not another minute," returned Mr. Gillman,

in the tones of authority which he very well knew were the most effectual with his neophyte. "Come; I'll pay your fare to your lodgings;" and, taking Arthur by the arm, he gently compelled him, without appearing to use compulsion, to leave the heated rooms and descend the stairs. A coachstand was near at hand; and, placing sufficient silver in the hand of Kemp to satisfy the demands of the coachman, he saw him safely into the vehicle, and then returned to the house he had just left.

Mr. Gillman looked round with quick eyes as he re-entered the room, till they rested on the person whom he sought; and on whom previously he had bestowed a few words of recognition.

"I did not expect to meet you here," said Mr. Gillman.

"I dare say not—I dare say not," replied the other briskly, and grasping Mr. Gillman's hand so tightly in a friendly shake as to bring tears into his eyes before the squeeze was over. "The fact is, this sort of thing isn't exactly in my way, Gillman; but having had a little business to do with Blizerhausen, he introduced me."

"You told me, just now," said Gillman, "that you had something to say to me. I could not listen then, because of that moon-calf at my elbow. But now I have packed him off, what is it?"

"Well, I want to ask you a question or two. What are you doing now? At the old shop in the city, I suppose?"

"Yes, I am."

"Ah well, every man to his taste: but I should have thought, now, that a man of your talents, Mr. Gillman, would have been sickened, long before now, of that sort of thing, when there are a hundred pleasanter ways of —" of he did not say what; but he made a significant motion with his thumb, which seemed to supply the place of words.

"You said you wanted to say a word or two, particularly, on business," said Mr. Gillman, in a peculiarly quiet voice, and fixing his eyes steadily on his new companion. "What is it? It is getting late; excuse me."

"That is what I was just coming at, my good fellow. Are you disposed to cut the concern in Thames-street, and join us?"

"In what?" inquired Mr. Gillman, in the same steady tones; "and who are the 'us'?"

A long whispered communication ensued, in which the words "joint-stock," "first-rate scheme," "capital," "splendid appointment," rose audibly above the under-current of conversation.

"You don't expect to catch me with such chaff," observed Mr. Gillman, with a sneer, when the other had come to an end for the time. "You do not think that I have forgotten the D. B. Mining Company, and what came of it."

"Well, my good friend, and what did come of it?" asked the stranger, with a benignant smile, or what might have been a benignant smile, if it had not been a superlatively cunning one. "What did come of it? Look at me. Come with me to my house: I'll tell you then what came of it." And again he whispered into Mr. Gillman's ear, of which might be caught the words, "While there are simpletons that will make ducks and drakes of their money—Come," he added, "it is what I



would not throw in everybody's way, but I know you; you are just cut out for us: be one of us."

"I must see deeper into it than I do just now before I say, Yes," said Mr. Gillman, warily. "But, as you say, there are too many ears about us here. I'll walk with you, if you will."

And, in company with Mr. Arthur Lightfoot, Mr. Gillman again descended into the street, and did not return to the rooms that night, or rather morning.

## CHAPTER XXIX.

## THE BLESSED EFFECTS OF AFFLICTION.

WE return to Rosemary-lodge, and to Miss Penelope Chester, whom we left in circumstances of considerable inconvenience, to say the least of them.

Six months had passed away since that dreary winter's evening; and Penelope sat in an easy chair, in her pleasant parlour, by an open window which looked out on to the little lawn, and beyond that to the beautiful valley below, and farther still to the distant hills on the other side, miles away. It was afternoon, and the sun shone brightly on the whole scene; there was not the shadow of a cloud on the whole landscape.

Miss Chester's face was thin and sharp; for her illness had been severe and painful, and her recovery slow. Even now she was, in a great measure, confined to her easy chair, except during an hour or two in the day, when she, with some difficulty, stepped into her little pony chaise, and was driven by Ellen along the green and shady roads round about Rosemary-lodge and the valley beneath. But there was an abiding expression on Miss Penelope's features which you would have looked for in vain six months before.

Ellen Marsden sat near Miss Chester, working a muslin collar. It would have done you good to see her then. There was so much sweetness, and tenderness, and affection, and happiness too, beaming in her face, and sparkling in her bright blue eyes, that—remembering your last interview with her—you would have greatly wondered. She was laughing quite merrily; and, strange phenomenon! Miss Penelope Chester laughed too. Then there was a break in the conversation—whatever might have been its subject, and it must have been a cheerful one to have elicited mirth from Miss Chester—and the invalid bent over a book which lay before her on the table.

As she read, her countenance re-assumed its solemnity; but it was a placid solemnity which suited well with her years and recently-acquired infirmities. At length it was plain she could read no longer for that time. A moisture, like a thick mist, spread between her eyes and the book. It was not in the atmosphere; nor was it on the glasses of Miss Chester's spectacles, though she seemed to think it might be there; for she took them off, and rubbed them carefully with her handkerchief: but when she put them on again the mist was thick as before. So she once more removed them, and placing them between the leaves of the book at the place she had been reading, she shut it up.

"Ellen." You would not have known it as Miss Chester's voice; but it was hers. Ellen knew it, and looked up—still smiling.

"Yes, aunt."

"Ellen, dear, I would rather you should call me cousin."

"Oh, I quite forgot at that moment," said Ellen, "and I have been so used to say 'aunt'; but I will try and remember. Yes, cousin."

"Your calling me aunt," continued Penelope Chester, "puts me too much in mind of—of what I would rather forget, if remembrance were not profitable: but I shall remember it without that. You *will* call me cousin, will you not? You like that name as well as the other, don't you, my dear?"

"Oh yes, better, cousin Penelope; a great deal better," said Ellen, cheerfully.

"And it is the right name, you know."

"Yes, cousin."

"That's right. And, Ellen, I wish to thank you for all your kindness and love to me since that day when our kind Father and best Friend laid his hand on me."

"Dear cousin Penelope," said Ellen, laying down her work, and looking up with tears in her eyes—but happy tears they seemed to be, though they stopped her in the middle of what she wished to say. "Dear cousin Penelope—"

"I never knew what sickness was before. I have often boasted that I never had had a day's illness since I was a child. It has been a happy experience to me, Ellen."

"It has been a very happy time, dear cousin Penelope—only that you suffered so much sometimes."

"Not too much, Ellen; not a single pain too much, dear. 'It is good for me that I have been afflicted; before I was afflicted I went astray.'"

"You were very patient, cousin," said Ellen, taking Penelope's hand in hers, and pressing it softly. She had risen and was standing, leaning over the high elbow of the invalid's easy chair—"very patient. Hannah says she never saw anybody half so patient, knowing what you must have suffered."

"Not half patient enough, dear Ellen; not half grateful enough! Oh, you do not know how much I murmured, and how angry I was at first."

"You did not show it, cousin, I am sure," said Ellen, tenderly.

"I had not any comfort at first," continued Miss Chester; "and in those long nights, after I was roused from the stupor of pain, and was able to think at all, I knew what it was to say in my heart, 'Would that it were morning; and when morning came, to cry out again, 'Would that it were evening.'"

"I am sure it was very trying to you, cousin," said Ellen; "but you were very patient." Penelope Chester's patience seemed so impressed on Ellen's mind, as something so unusual and unexpected, that she could not, if she had tried, have said anything more to the purpose. "Very patient, dear cousin; very resigned."

"It was my dear little nurse who taught me patience by her example," said the invalid. "It went to my heart, Ellen, when I watched, and watched, and watched you. I did not know you at first, for my mind wandered; but when, bit by bit, I came to find where I was, and what had happened—it went to my heart to see you so kind,

and attentive, and unwearied, day and night, always about me, and thinking of something for my comfort, when I had never done anything for yours—never deserved your love."

"Dear cousin Penelope—please don't—don't say any more," whispered Ellen.

"A little more, only a little more, Ellen," pleaded the invalid. "I must say it: it has been on my mind to tell you something of what I felt, of what I do feel. Let me say it, my dear child. Yes, I felt then, and I feel now, that I had done nothing to gain your love; but much I had done to make you wish you had never known or seen your hard-hearted task-mistress. That very day, when God saw fit to punish me—"

"Pray, dear cousin Penelope, don't say any more—don't speak of that," cried poor Ellen, and so imploringly, and she seemed so distressed, that it would have been a proof of Penelope Chester's hard-heartedness if she had gone on.

"Well, my love, I won't say any more about that; but it set me thinking, Ellen; and my thoughts were very bitter—very sad. I had known but little kindness in my young days, Nelly—I may say that without murmuring now—and I did not know how to show the kindness that I felt. I had come to fancy that life itself, to be properly used, would be nothing but a stern and sorrowful struggle; that light-heartedness and mirth were sins to be deeply repented of and rooted out. No, I did not know how to show kindness; I had no sympathy with joy. I did what I believed was right, Ellen; but I had made your life a very gloomy one."

Ellen lifted her face, which she had partly hidden in her cousin's shawl, and kissed Penelope's pale cheek. "It is not a gloomy life now, dear cousin," she said, smiling.

"I bless our heavenly Father that you can say that, Ellen," said the invalid. "I was afraid I had learned too late. I cannot tell you," she went on, "all the thoughts that crowded into my mind, day after day, and night after night, when I saw your dear face looking so kindly and lovingly on me, and your dear little hands and feet that never seemed to tire. But gradually—for I was a dull scholar in this school, my Ellen—gradually and slowly I learnt, as I hope, the lesson which my affliction was sent to teach. And then, when I remembered more and more of what I had done, and what I had left undone—and when the news came that your dear father had been so ill, and yet you were unwilling to leave me—"

"You know," whispered Ellen, "father was better when we knew of his illness; and he himself wrote to me not to leave you, dear cousin, to come to him while I could be of any use to you. And he is quite well now; better than he has felt for years, he writes," said Ellen, joyfully.

"We will see and judge for ourselves, dear Ellen," said cousin Penelope. "We will go to London next week."

"Oh, thank you, thank you, cousin," exclaimed Ellen, clapping her little hands; "that will be so nice and good—if you can bear the journey," she added.

"I believe I shall be able, Nelly; we must travel by short stages, if we cannot make long ones," said the invalid smiling at Ellen's outburst of joy,

for which at one time she would have reproved her as for an improper desire for earthly delights. "But I must finish what I had on my mind to say: when I saw and felt all your undeserved kindness and love, I prayed—oh, how earnestly I prayed—that the past might be forgiven, and help granted me in time to come to make your life a happy as well as a useful one; and that your heavenly Father might bless you indeed."

"And now," added Miss Chester, "I shall not tire you any more with my confessions. Go and put your bonnet on, love, and go and see Margaret Filmer: she wants to see you very much; and I promised to persuade you to take tea with her to-day."

### A DESPERATE COMBAT.

IN manhood, when the cares of life surround us, and responsibilities which it would be disgraceful to manhood to repudiate oppress us with their weight, we are apt to look back upon the period of childhood with longing eyes, as upon a time of unmixed happiness, because it was free from the obligations and trials of the present moment. I am of opinion that this sentimental kind of retrospect in which we indulge is anything but a truthful review; that, could we recall the feelings of childhood, its anxieties and its fears, as easily as we can revisit the scenes and revive the material associations of our infant years, we should find, in the majority of cases, that life was even then as much chequered with light and shadow, suffering and enjoyment, as it is now, and that the child as well as the man has a warfare to wage and a victory to win or lose. I have heard men declare, when the halcyon era of childhood was sung in their hearing, that childhood to them was one long season of unmingled misery—not from want of the comforts of life, but from want of sympathy and from the pressure of a despotism, perhaps paternal and kindly meant, enforcing a routine which grew by degrees into a sort of torture. I have, myself, no complaint of that kind to make; yet, in recalling the days of my infant years, I can recall sorrows and difficulties, strictly personal, which, considering my capacity for contending with them, were not inferior to any that have crossed my path since it has been my lot to do single battle with the world. The reader may take the following adventure as a sample, with the wish on the part of the writer that it may afford more amusement in the perusal than it did in the performance.

It was the middle of summer, the schoolboy's vacation time, and I, a little urchin "going in eight," had been left by myself, at a boarding-school where thirty boys generally congregated, to spend the holidays in consequence of illness in the family at home, the infection of which it was feared I might take. Alone in the empty school-room, I led an uncomfortable sort of life of it, my only companion, when she could spare time to be companionable, being Joannah, the servant-maid, who was left in charge of the house and me while my pedagogue and his family were gone to spend the vacation at the sea-side. A weary time it was. True, I had a multiplicity of playthings—bats, balls,

kites, marbles, etc., etc.; but all these were social instruments, and I was alone. Joannah could rarely be induced to make a party at single-wicket: she could not be taught, though I tried it, to play at "peg in the ring:" she showed what I conceived a most disgraceful ignorance on the subject of "alleys," "stoners," and "clayers," and had, moreover, a relative in top-boots, corduroys, and spriggy waistcoat, who was constantly coming to see her, and took up most of her time; so that I was obliged to "keep myself to myself," as supercilious people of a certain class express it, more than I liked, and much against my will.

One afternoon, when Joannah had taken it into her head to scour the school-room floor, desks, benches, and all, I shut up my story book, and throwing a cricket bat over my shoulder and taking the big ball in my hand—it was too large to cram into my pocket—I wandered, listless and melancholy, down to the common, about a quarter of a mile off. Here I made, for an hour or two, sundry mournful attempts to play a game of cricket single-handed—throwing the ball up in the air, and striking it as far as I could as it fell, and running to fetch it. This sort of exercise, with nobody to look on or applaud, was not particularly fascinating, and did not last long, though long enough to throw me into a profuse perspiration, and fatigue me to the utmost. Again I shouldered the bat, grasped the big ball in my hand, and languidly wended back towards the school.

The school was a detached building, away from the dwelling-house, which stood in the main-street of the town. We never passed through the house in getting at the school, but entered it from a lane in the rear; and in order to get into the play-ground, where the school-room stood, it was necessary to cross what in that part of the country is called a "barton," or small farm-yard, littered with straw and manure heaps, populous with fowls, and occasionally foraged by an enterprising pig or two.

I was tired out and very hot, and ere entering the barton sat down for some minutes to cool myself in the shade. Not a breath was stirring, and not a sound broke the silence in which all things seemed hushed beneath the fiery beams of that burning sun. I stepped down from the stile, and was proceeding to cross the barton, when suddenly, with a sonorous flurring of wings and a portentous snake-like hiss, out rushed upon me a monster gander—his eyes glaring, his throat agape—and made a dart at my face with his bill, giving me at the same moment such a dig in the side with his wing as made me imagine that every one of my ribs was broken. I turned, and ran for it as well as I could, crippled as I was with pain; but the creature got between me and the stile, which was the only immediate way of escape, as the door of the play-ground was shut fast, and the bell had to be rung for Joannah before it would be opened from within. He now attacked me again with blows on the legs and thighs, which tortured me to the very marrow. I bawled aloud, but no one came, and, driven desperate with pain and apprehension, I struck frantically at the gander with the bat; in return, he rose in the air, and plunged like an arrow at my face, wounding my hand, which I interposed to save my eyes. I would have

given the world to have got away; but there I was, shut up in a space not twenty yards square, with this savage enemy, one blow of whose wing on the head I thought would have split my skull. Terror gave me strength, and I brandished my bat with wild energy, and by a lucky blow on the wing prevented the recurrence of those bounding leaps which had alarmed me for my eyes. I should have been glad now to have made a compromise, and sneaked off; but the bird, enraged by the stroke he had received, grew all the more furious, and rained such a storm of blows with head and wing upon my shins, that I expected every moment to be felled to the ground. Watching my opportunity, I swung the bat aloft, and with a desperate sweep descended full upon the gander's head. The poor fellow ran round and round in a direful flutter, and, to my horror, bled piteously, as he edged feebly off to some loose straw in a corner, and left me master of the field. I was afraid to pass him to get at the play-ground door, but surmounting the stile as well as I could, entered the house at the front door, where Joannah stood talking with somebody in the gloom of the passage, and limped off to the general bed-room.

Here I had leisure to reflect and recover myself. I had endured agonies, both of pain and terror, which it is impossible to describe, but to these was now added the anguish of remorse. I had slain the farmer's gander. I was sure he would die, and I had no doubt but that some terrible punishment would be the reward of the murderer, if discovered. Should I be transported, and go to Botany-bay; or be imprisoned for life; or put in the pillory or the stocks? Would my parents ever see me again if they knew what I had done? These were some of the questions I asked myself, and I pusillanimously resolved to keep my secret. Meanwhile I was aching from the shoulders to the ankles; my whole body felt like one bruise, and it was with the utmost pain that I could move about. I did contrive to hobble down to the school-room, however, and was hypocrite enough to pretend to be wrapped up in my book when Joannah brought me my tin mug of warm sky-blue and two half-rounds of bread and butter for tea.

When eight o'clock struck, Joannah came to put me to bed. I objected to go, on the ground that I wanted to finish the chapter; but the fact was, I was afraid she would discover my crippled condition if I attempted to walk, and thus get a clew to the death of the gander. I told her I would go to bed by myself, without troubling her again, and felt inexpressibly relieved when, consenting to this arrangement, she wished me good night. When she was gone, I crawled up to the dormitory, which was over the school-room, and not daring to say my prayers with the consciousness of a secret upon my soul, crept into bed thoroughly miserable. Quite exhausted, I soon fell asleep; but horrible dreams haunted my imagination—dreams in which I beheld the gander lying dead, with the face of an innocent babe, which a robin red-breast, in a judge's wig, was covering with leaves.

What my bodily sufferings must have been may be judged from the fact, that I had the utmost difficulty in getting out of bed in the morning,

and when I did get out, discovered that nearly the whole of the lower part of my person was one mass of green-black bruises. It took me almost an hour to dress myself; and I had to stay in the school-room several days, until the pain and the stiffness wore off. Some days after the battle I accidentally overheard the conversation of two of the town boys in the churchyard, one of whom was telling the other how farmer Bickerstaff's gander got killed by a kick from "a oss." This information relieved my mind for the time, for I thought the horse was able to bear the consequences of the gander's death than I was—and felt a secret affection for the animal upon whose head (or heels) the burden of my involuntary crime had been cast. It was not till a long while after, when I mustered courage to mention the circumstance, that I could look upon a gander, or a goose, complacently, unless at the dinner-table.

If I were disposed to make any reflections upon this true story, their tendency would be against the subjecting of a young child to isolation and solitude, and leaving him to the chance of his own resources under desperate circumstances, which it is always within the range of possibility may happen to him. The remorse which occasioned me such agony at the time now appears sufficiently ridiculous; yet was it but the natural effect of the over-excited apprehensions of a child. I would have saved myself, however, much inward distress had I been only courageous enough to have mentioned at once what had occurred; and parents and guardians cannot too much impress on the young the advantage of their being manly and open in acknowledging any dilemma in which they find themselves placed.

### SKETCHES OF THE CRIMEA.

ITS FORMER RULERS.—THE TATAR KHANATE AND KHANS.

ENGLAND has had a shepherd-lord, and the Crimea a shepherd-khan. While the wars of the roses were in process, the last scion of a noble Lancastrian house was placed by a widowed mother in a rustic cabin, to screen him from the vengeance of the Yorkists. The child became a man in that humble estate, dressed as a peasant, toiled like a menial, was out on the northern moors in the pattering rain and driving snow, foddering cattle and folding sheep, profoundly ignorant of his ancestral station, till a political revolution rendered it prudent to reveal his quality to himself, and his preservation to the world.

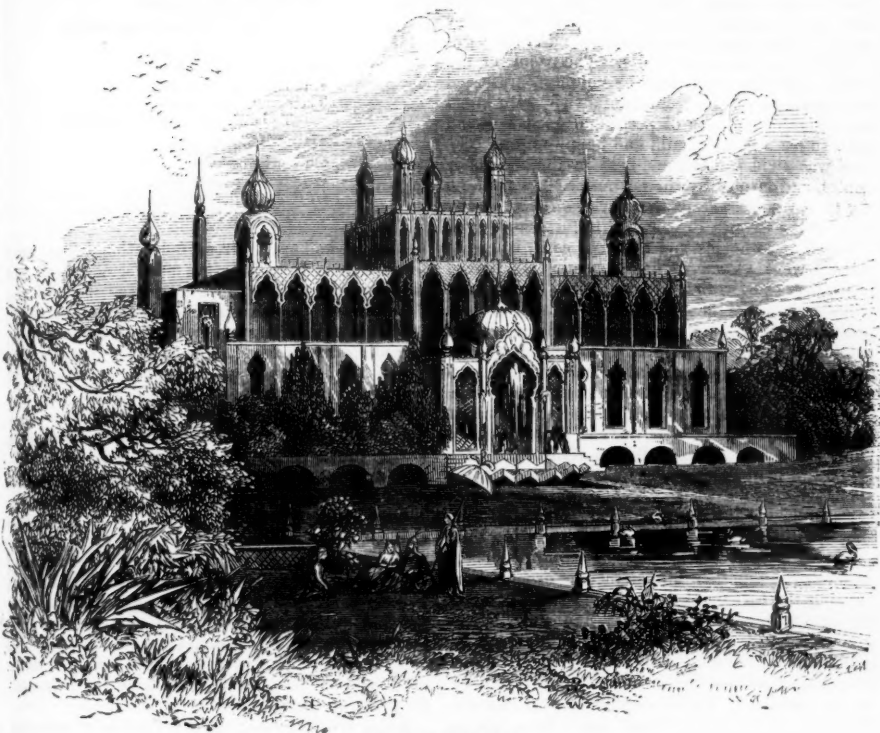
"And ages after he was laid in earth,  
The 'good lord Clifford' was the name he bore."

The Crimean incident occurred in the same century, but at an earlier period. In one of the many revolutions from internal strife and foreign violence to which the empire of western Tătary was subject, a prince of the house of Tamerlane gained the throne, and endeavoured to secure it by destroying all the branches of the old stock of Ghengis Khan. The bloody deed was done, but not completely. A boy of very tender years, named Devlet, escaped the ruin of his family, and was reserved to restore its fallen fortunes. Saved by a shepherd, and

kindly nurtured in his humble home, he adopted his garb, habits, and occupation, and, in the obscure condition of a herdsman, tended the cattle, sheep, and goats of his foster-father. The child became a youth, and the youth a man, wholly unacquainted with his high lineage, and the vast inheritance legitimately his own. But a day came when the nation violently threw off the yoke of the new dynasty, exasperated by its oppressions, and bitterly regretted the extinction of the ancient line. In this conjuncture the preserved prince was produced; and, upon his identity being established, he was restored to his rights, and unanimously placed by his countrymen at their head. Devlet proved himself equal to the task of ruling a somewhat headstrong and intractable people. He made the Crimea for a short period the seat of an independent monarchy, which extended over a vast sweep of the adjoining continent; and Bagtche-Serai became the capital of the khanate of Crim Tătary. This was about the year 1440. The khan did not forget his benefactor. He asked what recompense he wished for having saved his life, and befriended him in adversity. "Adopt my name," was the reply, "in connection with your own, and let the name of Gherai be transmitted to your descendants, in memory of the poor shepherd by whom you were rescued." This distinction was not withheld from one who showed himself so disinterested; and to the last hour of the khanate, through nearly three centuries and a half, the name of the peasant was invariably joined with their other names by the khans of the Crimea.

Meanwhile, the Genoese retained their settlements, but being purse-proud and domineering, while the Tatars had hot blood in their veins, they were not calculated to be amicable next-door neighbours. There were endless squabbles, petty fights in abundance, wars and rumours of wars not a few. Devlet Gherai left eight sons. The merchant rulers of Kaffa managed to pounce upon seven of the number, and locked them up in a fortress, as hostages for the other brother whom they supported, ruling in accommodation to their will. But a change was at hand for both parties. In 1453, the Turks took Constantinople; and their terrible sultan, Mohammed II, the "Father of Conquest," owed the Genoese a grudge. During the siege, one of their countrymen, captain of a merchant vessel, left his ship in the Golden Horn, upon the invitation of the Greek emperor, and took the command of the garrison, to the no small detriment of the beleaguering host. Thenceforth, the very name of Genoese was as gall and wormwood to the conquering Moslem. In little more than twenty years his fleet appeared off Kaffa, while the Tatars, as the co-religionists of the Turks, exasperated by the political intrigues of the commercial republic, operated by land in the reduction of the place. It fell in June, 1475, after a desperate resistance of six days; and the minor settlements soon shared the fate of the mother city. The massive ruins of fortifications and watch-towers, and a street with an arcade before the houses, are the chief memorials of Italian enterprise remaining in the present town. A Genoese epitaph in the museum, a fragment from one of the churches, dating in the year 1523, proves that after the Turkish conquest some of the people remained in





PALACE OF THE KHANS.

their ancient home, where they were allowed to grow old and die not unhonoured.

The Ottoman, whose very name was the common terror of Europe, and whose simple menace frightened pope Sixtus into packing up his goods and chattels in order to fly across the Alps, readily induced Mengli Gheraï, son of Devlet, to acknowledge his supreme authority, and hold the khanate as an appanage of his empire. The subjects of the latter were not indisposed to this arrangement, owing to the renown of the potentate, community of creed, and the nature of the relationship. The Turks regarded the Tatars more as allies than vassals, supplying their armies with splendid cavalry; while the Tatars revered the sultans as the most powerful chiefs of their religion, and the legitimate heads of Islam, when the phantom representative of the ancient caliphs surrendered to them his rank. For more than a century afterwards the masters of Constantinople were not the dolts, idiots, and mere debauchees they subsequently became, when cramped and effeminated by the completed discipline of the seraglio; but men of vigorous capacity, occasionally adopting enlarged views. A great industrial operation in the khanate of the Crimea, commenced about the year 1570, is an evidence of this. Since the discovery of the passage to India by the Cape, the trade between eastern Asia and western Europe had been

diverted from the overland route to the maritime channel. But sultan Selim II, in conjunction with the Crimean khan, endeavoured to restore it to the ancient course, by uniting with a canal the great streams of the Don and the Volga, thus opening a navigable passage from the Black sea to the Caspian, and establishing easy commercial communication between Europe and Asia. Some traces of this canal are still visible. Its progress was interrupted in a remarkable manner. While the navvies, as we may call them, were proceeding with the work, a body of men, with uncouth figures, strange features, and barbarous language, sallied out from a neighbouring town, surprised the expedition, and cut workmen and soldiers to pieces. They were the Muscovite subjects of Ivan the Terrible; and this was the first encounter between *the Turks and the Russians*. A few years later, in 1584, a Turkish general, Osman Pasha, serving in Georgia, crossed the Caucasus to help the khan of the Crimea, assailed by the Russians, and from thence proceeded through Bessarabia across the Danube to Constantinople, when the crescent for the first time made the circuit of the Black sea.

At the height of their power the khans ruled over a vast dominion. It stretched from the Danube on the one hand to the Caucasus on the other; while its northern frontier extended as far as Poland and Lesser Russia. This territory

included various tribes, among whom the Crim Tatars were the most advanced in polity. Some led a wandering life; but others skilfully cultivated the soil, engaged in commerce, had elementary schools, and were distributed in paternally governed communal settlements. The people of the towns and villages, headed by notables, presented the sovereign, on the occasion of a visit, with bread and salt, the emblems of peace and good-will, and with sugar, that of a mild and happy reign. The land was divided into feods, held by the myrzas or nobles, and farmed by the peasantry. It paid no tax to the state, except that each *radilik*, or district of the Crimea Proper, had to furnish a wagon drawn by two horses and a load of corn, when the princes went to war. Their revenue was derived from the salt works, the customs, the annual tributes, and the booty obtained in military expeditions. It was sufficient to enable them to build palaces and kiosks, live in splendour, and indulge in luxury. They were royally lavish in its expenditure, and would reply to economical advisers—"What good is it to hoard up wealth? Who ever knew a Gherai to die of poverty?" Calculations upon the profit of some future foray stimulated this spendthrift spirit. The khans governed by the aid of a divan, and when absent from the territory a regent was appointed. Besides ordinary ministers, they retained professional astrologers in their service—the universal practice of potentates in the middle ages, whether Mohammedan or Christian, wearing the turban, the tiara, or the crown. The fiat of these men decided the day and hour of giving battle, while their office made them acquainted with all state secrets. Hence the safety of the master depended entirely upon the fidelity of the official. When Kaplan Gherai lay encamped upon the Pruth, and might have won an easy victory over the Russians, his astrologer pronounced the day unfavourable for an attack. Hence he suffered the opportunity to escape him; and the enemy having time to bring up reinforcements, the khan was routed. It afterwards oozed out that an agent from marshal Romanzow had got access to the astrologer, and bribed him to accommodate his reading of celestial signs to Russian interests. - Innumerable tricks of this kind led to a clause being added to a proverb of long standing in the east, that "a Greek can cheat a Turk, a Jew will cozen a Greek, and an Armenian deceive a Jew;" whereas "a Russian," the supplement referred to, "will trick them all, and *Schaitan* (the evil one) himself."

An army of a hundred thousand men followed some of the khans into the field. The Tatar horsemen, with sabre, lance, and buckler, were long the dread of Poles, Hungarians, and Germans. The foot soldiers, in early times, employed the sling, bows, and arrows, besides the sword. Both cavalry and infantry used the lasso. Horns of cattle served as substitutes for the bugle. In peace, the military spirit was fostered by martial games and warlike songs. Sham fights and mock sieges were common pastimes. On these occasions, to guard against feuds arising from inadvertent injury being inflicted, the contending parties were previously sworn on the koran not to allow accident to give birth to resentment. The following are stanzas of a popular war-song:—

"Fling high! oh fling high!  
To the bright blue sky,  
The banner that led  
Our forefathers dead,  
To battle! to battle! to battle!  
Hope, like a bright star,  
Shines forth from afar;  
And leads on the brave,  
Their country to save,  
To battle! to battle! to battle!  
May each glittering tear  
On our heroes' bier  
Gem the deathless crown  
Of their bright renown.  
To battle! to battle! to battle!"

The Turks have their sacred national flag, said to have come down from the founder of Islam, and only brought out on great occasions. So had the Tatars. This was an ancient moth-eaten standard, preserved with care, and specially venerated; for, according to tradition, it had once been borne before the padishah of padishahs, the king of kings, Ghengis Khan. In the Russian war, the banner was conveyed to the frontier under a guard of imams; and from the lines of Perekop it floated to the breeze.

We string together a few notices of the most distinguished Tatar rulers, their capital and palace.

Ghazi Gherai, who died peacefully in 1608, was not only famous in war, a bold and generous soldier, but cultivated the elegant arts, poetry and music. In 1602, while in winter quarters at Fünfkirchen, in Hungary, he versified a contest between coffee and wine; and was accustomed, after the oriental manner, to clothe in verse his correspondence on important state affairs. Some of these poetical official documents are in manuscript in the Berlin library.

Selim Gherai, eulogised by his contemporaries, both Christian and Mohammedan, as not more brave than magnanimous, defeated in a single campaign the united armies of Austria, Poland, and Russia, saved the standard of the prophet, which had fallen into the hands of the enemy, and so captivated the janizaries by his chivalrous bearing, that they proposed to substitute him for their own sultan. But he had no love for power or state, and several times abdicated his own throne, to be as often recalled by public emergencies, dying in the exercise of that authority to which he attached so little value. The khan accompanied the incapable grand-vizier, Kara Mustapha, to the second siege of Vienna, in 1683. While the regular army prosecuted the siege, his cavalry scoured the country far and wide, occasionally encountering some rough handling, owing to incautious audacity. Abbot Kolbries surprised a detachment; and forty heads of Tatars, with which he returned to his abbey of Lilienfeld, illustrated the martial vigour of the churchman. In the decisive battle before the walls of Vienna, the military eye of Selim quickly discerned in the arrangements of the imperial army the generalship of the redoubtable John Sobieski, who had just arrived to take the command. The Turkish pashas gave way to panic; the grand-vizier fled to find a bow-string at home; and the Tatar khan, borne along by the stream, became a fugitive.

Devlet Gherai, named after the founder of the dynasty, engaged in a campaign against Peter the

Great, in conjunction with the Turks, whose councils were aided by Charles XII of Sweden, then a refugee among them. On the Pruth, in the year 1711, the czar was so environed, that his capture, with that of his entire army, might easily have been effected. His dexterous empress, Catherine, who was present in the camp, saved him from the dilemma, by bribing the grand-vizier, Baltadji Mohammed, who allowed the noblest prize which the fortune of war ever presented to a general to slip through his fingers. It is curious to reflect what the destiny of Russia and Turkey would have been had the czar, the czarina, generals, soldiers, and baggage, been trooped off to Constantinople. The gaunt Swede raved like a madman at this ignoble proceeding; and failing to procure the punishment of the delinquent, he became such an impracticable guest, that the authorities were compelled forcibly to eject him from the empire. The Tatar khan bided his time to vent his wrath. A few years afterwards he was summoned to Adrianople, where the sultan was, to attend a council of war. At its close, he was in the act of mounting his horse to return to the Crimea, when he suddenly stood still, with one foot in the stirrup. "What," said Achmet III, "can make Devlet Gherai tarry thus?" "I am waiting," he replied, "that thou shouldst send me the head of Baltadji Mohammed." In a few minutes the head came; and the sultan, being in a vein of complaisance, added to it the head of the reis-effendi, and that of the aga of the janizaries, as the khan had expressed himself displeased with them.

The capital of the khans, Bagtche-Serai, a still existing town, occupied almost exclusively by Tatars, contained nearly two hundred thousand inhabitants in the days of its prosperity. Its site is a narrow romantic dale between high mountains, not unlike the valley of Matlock. The sides bristle with large cube-shaped rocks, which seem ready to fall and crush the houses. A small river, the Djourouk-Sou, flows at the bottom of the dell, from which the houses rise in terraces along the sides of the hills, interspersed with gardens, vineyards, and clumps of trees, chiefly Lombardy poplars. Mosques appear in the midst of the trees and raise their minarets above the dwellings. The place breaks suddenly upon the visitor, and is extremely imposing, while distance gives enchantment to the view. The Khan-Serai, or palace, at the eastern extremity of the town, still carefully preserved, is an immense collection of coquettish, unequal, and contrasting edifices, overshadowed by large red roofs, and surmounted with turrets answering the purpose of chimneys. The buildings include the private apartments of the khan, the harem, the hall of justice, the stables, a splendid mosque, and a cemetery, with offices, courts, gardens, fountains, baths, corridors, and halls, forming a perfect labyrinth, adorned with devices and inscriptions. There is scarcely a door but what has its sentence or talismanic cipher, mingled with paintings of flowers, fruits, birds, stars, and scrolls. The paintings have no artistic merit. Glaring tints of red and green are the prevailing colours. The inscriptions are verses from the koran in Arabic, and commemorative records of the old lords of the abode in the Tatar language, rife with the peculiar spirit of orientalism.

One over the principal entrance states—"The master of this door is the conqueror of the surrounding soil, the mighty lord Hadgi Gherai Khan, son of Mengli Gherai Khan. May Allah vouchsafe unto the Khan Mengli Gherai, and to his father and mother, the gift of felicity in this world and in that which is to come." The double-headed imperial eagle of Russia now soars above it, in place of the Mohammedan crescent, as the symbol of proprietorship.

The harem is a quiet-looking house of five rooms, to which a moderate-sized garden is attached. Here dwelt the four wives of the khan, generally in the utmost retirement. The rulers of Crim Tatory usually followed the precept of the koran, which limited them to four wives, with greater exactness than the Ottoman sultans and pashas. The hall of justice is a lofty circular apartment, with a gilt ceiling, and a sombre aspect, owing to the paucity of windows. Even these were closed when the judge had to decide on an important case, to give solemnity to the proceeding; and the chamber was feebly illuminated with artificial lights. Upon an accused person being found guilty, he was led out on the left hand to undergo summary punishment. If acquitted, he departed on the right. Sometimes the khans were present, to satisfy themselves that justice was duly administered. They occupied a kind of side gallery, inclosed by lattice-work, so that neither judge nor criminal was aware of their presence.

The palace of gardens, as Bagtche-Serai signifies, might with equal propriety have been called the palace of fountains. Beautiful springs bubble, flow, and wind in all directions, in the planted grounds, the cemetery, and the vestibules. One of these, bearing the name of the fountain of Marie, and also the fountain of Tears, has a tale connected with it, which Poushkin, the unfortunate Russian poet, has told. During an expedition into Poland, one of the khans brought away with him, as a prisoner, the beautiful daughter of a wealthy noble, and wished to make her his wife. She was presented with the finest dresses, had the best apartments in the palace, and every pleasure that could be commanded was placed at her feet. But the Polish girl rejected his advances, thought only of the home and friends she had left, and abandoned herself to sorrow. It is even said that a Christian chapel was prepared, and priests procured to say mass, in order that nothing might be wanting to meet her views. But all was fruitless, and the mighty lord of Crim Tatory became a moody and dejected man. Marie would not ally herself with an alien to her religion and an enemy to her fatherland, though kind treatment at last conciliated her regard. At this point of the story, a Georgian girl, who had been long jealous of the Pole, resolved to rid herself of a rival, and stabbed with a dagger the innocent stranger, who immediately expired upon the spot. The khan, after causing the murderess to be executed, and plunging into the turmoil of war to banish the recollection of the tragedy, returned home to commemorate his grief by erecting the fountain of Tears in the vestibule of the palace. It is composed of several basins, one above the other, the lowest overflowing in the form of drops, meant to represent the tears of the mourner. It

has also an inscription, but wholly unconnected with the incident, as follows:—

"Rejoice! rejoice! Baghtche-Sera! For the enlightened Khan Krim Gherai, ever benevolent, ever solicitous for the welfare of his children, discovered this excellent spring of the purest water, and through his own munificence erected this beautiful fountain. Glory to the most omnipotent!

"If there exists such another fountain in the universe, let it be found!

"Damascus and Bagdad have many glorious things, but so beautiful a fountain they have not beheld."

Another inscription on a second fountain thus closes:—

"He that is tormented with thirst will raise his eyes across the stream that flows through pipes thin as his finger, and read these lines. But what is the invitation they bear? Come; drink ye of this limpid fount which flows from the purest of sources. It brings you health."

The palace-mosque, identified by slender minarets, has over the chief entrance the following record:—

"Who was Hadgi Selim? The most illustrious of all the khans of Krim Tatars. The hero by God's divine power. May the Almighty God, in his supreme kindness, recompense Hadgi Selim, for it was he that commenced the erection of this beautiful mosque. Who completed the work? Schlamet Gherai Khan, the son of his love, the rose now in full bearing, who has become the pasha and lion of the Crimea!"

Behind the mosque is the cemetery, planted with nut, mulberry, and poplar trees, a spring trickling through the plants and shrubs. Here, chiefly in two domed rotundas, from twenty to thirty khans—restless spirits in their day—sleep the sleep of death. Their wives and kindred lie near them. The tombs are in the form of a bier, the upper side of which is of an angular shape. Each has at the head a stone, the top of which is sculptured in the form of a turban. But in some instances, the veritable turban of the deceased, now dingy and tattered, crowns the funeral monument. The tombs of the women are distinguished by the peculiarly-shaped cap sculptured at the head. A separate mausoleum, consisting of a gilded cupola supported by marble columns, was erected by Krim Gherai, mentioned in a preceding inscription, who here laid the remains of his beautiful wife, a Georgian princess. This celebrated khan, a great favourite with his subjects, took the field against the Russians with 50,000 men in the year 1764; but soon died at Bender, poisoned by a Greek physician, a supposed tool of the enemy.

#### AN INDIAN LADY AT HOME.

THE English public appears to take at length some interest in our eastern possessions, and English men and women begin to feel a sympathy for the fellow beings in that remote country who belong to our empire, and yet are not of us. Ladies who have resided in India are often questioned whether they have made any efforts to Christianise the native female population. There is no doubt much might be done if casual opportunities were im-

proved, and advantage taken of the slight openings which sometimes occur for cultivating the acquaintance of Asiatic ladies of the higher classes. English women are in general debarred from all possibility of being on friendly terms with the best portion of Indian families. Our habits are by them considered so immodest and repulsive, that they would rather avoid than seek our society; and, unless the desire for acquaintance originates with them, it is impossible to pass the barrier of their seclusion. During the sixteen years of my residence in India I never met with but one opportunity of the kind. Unhappily, circumstances prevented me from making the most of the promising opening. My husband's regiment was at the time stationed at Agra; being on the staff, he had business to transact with a wealthy banker, a Hindoo of high caste, who, however, never bore any appearance of his riches, for he dressed in the shabbiest manner, and had the reputation of being extremely penurious; the only luxury he allowed himself to display being a fine Arab horse. He was a young man, of short stature and very mean appearance. In his frequent visits on business, he was occasionally obliged to remain in my sitting-room, while other persons were in my husband's office. His presence, however, never prevented my pursuing my usual employments, teaching my little girls to read and sew, at their regular hours, or amusing myself according to my custom with painting birds or animals from nature. The subject I was then engaged on was a striped squirrel, and when finished, the said (banker) expressed great admiration for it, and asked me if I would allow him to show it to his "house," meaning thereby his wife—for they deem it indelicate to name a wife more directly. I replied, that I should feel gratified if he accepted it as a gift for his "house." At the next visit he entreated me to permit his house the favour of an interview at his dwelling in the city. I took this as a mere compliment; but he frequently entreated both my husband and myself to grant this request, and even sent a formal invitation by his confidential servant, in the native style. My husband was very much averse to my going, saying I had no idea of the designing nature of the people, and that my innocent visit might be converted into a political intrigue. After some weeks of entreating on all sides he at length consented, because the regiment was then under orders to leave Agra. The day for my visit being fixed, I went in a palkee sent for me, my little girls being in another. I took none of my own servants, for I knew they were not of a caste high enough to be admissible in such an abode as I was about to visit. After being carried a long way through the narrow lanes of the city, the houses appearing (as I could peep through the chinks of the palkee doors) to have no windows towards the street, we came at length to a great gate, kept by a porter, who admitted us into a court-yard, and we were carried up in our palkees by inclined slopes to a great height, and then requested to alight at the foot of a narrow and very steep flight of stairs, like the back-stairs of queen Mary's apartments in Holyrood palace; at the top of these a little low door admitted us to the roof of the house. It was laid out like a garden, in geometrical flower-beds, with a pretty



fountain in the centre, and surrounded by arched porticoes fit to walk under in wet weather, and adorned with carved work and recesses for vases, but which, however, contained none. At one end, the portico was shut in by brightly striped hangings. These were raised, and a young woman about eighteen came forward; she gave me a warm welcome in the Asiatic style, and asked me to enter her own apartments, her slave woman and female attendant being desired to stay at the other end. They were all handsomely dressed and covered with ornaments, but their mistress surpassed them all in beauty and the richness of her attire. She was tall, even for a European, and in her eastern dress appeared still more so. Her complexion was of a pale yellow, the features regular, and her dark eyes and hair particularly beautiful. Her figure was slender and graceful, and particularly well shaped about the bust and arms, and was seen without disguise, as she wore only a very full orange satin petticoat, with a deep silver fringe on it, and a short crimson velvet boddiece covered with jewels over her bosom. Her arms were loaded with jewelled bracelets and strings of large pearls. Round her was a fine white cashmere shawl, worn like a girdle; and over her head and shoulders was thrown a green gauze veil, spotted with stars of gold, and having a gold border. Her hair was covered with strings of jewels, and fastened behind in a knot. Her ear-rings were composed of a cluster of a few large pearls, and in her left nostril was a large thin gold ring, from which one large pear-shaped pearl hung on her cheek. I never saw such a profusion of jewels, for even her feet and ankles had ornaments of silver on them. She asked me to be seated on a chair, while she placed herself on some cushions. "And you have come at last, and brought those children that God has given you; my lord told me all about them."

I replied, expressing a hope that she would excuse the language I made use of—the camp dialect—which I told her was not such as was fit to be spoken before great people.

"Never mind," she answered, cheerfully; "we can make each other understand. I only want to be spoken to in the words of truth. You were not afraid to come here alone?"

"No," I said; "I never feel fear. I did not think you asked me to your house to harm me."

She admired my children, whose faces were in her eyes "like those of fairies," and asked me if it were true we English women could marry whoever we liked. I explained, it was true we could refuse to marry any one we disliked; but it was thought shameful if a woman let a man understand she wished him for a husband.

"But is it true you can do as you please in all things after marriage?"

"By no means," I replied. "We make a solemn promise to obey our husbands, and ought not to act in anything without their permission."

"Both of us," she said, "are under control, in different ways. I am kept like a bird in a cage. What is the use of my limbs? I have never walked in the open fields; never dared to look at the beautiful things I have seen in the woods, on my journeys, only having glimpses of them through the hangings of my carriage; while you can come and go without hindrance: and, besides this, you

know so much. I wished to learn, and my little brothers taught me to read and write Persian; but after they were seven years old they were not permitted to see me, except through those hangings; and, besides, I know as much as they can teach. I have read many Persian books; they are full of lies. I am not a Mussulmani, and cannot believe their wonderful tales. When my lord told me about you, and showed me the squirrels, I thought, perhaps, you would come and teach me to read and write English, and to paint and amuse myself; for I am weary of the life I lead, and find no happiness in embroidery, bathing, dressing, eating, and sleeping. I have not been favoured by God with children, and I dread that some day another woman may be the mother of my lord's children; for we know that a wife without children is considered accursed, and a husband is not to blame if he desires another wife to continue his name. There is no love in our marriages; our parents bestow us as they think best. Could I have had my will I never would have married the squire: he has a mean soul; it grieves him to part with money: he knows not how to bestow gifts, or to distribute food to the starving poor; all his thoughts are upon heaping up money. You must have observed the meanness of his appearance; his clothes are coarse and well-worn, suitable for a poor, hard-working labourer, and not fit for one whose wealth is well known. If he denied himself and gave to the poor, such an evil name would not be given him."

I remarked: "However poor may be his own apparel, at least he does not oblige you to follow his example. The jewels with which you are covered are of immense value, and the whole of your attire is costly; to you he is liberal. Your apartments also appear to have every ornament and luxury a lady of rank could require."

"All these," replied the lady, "are my own property, and he dare not deprive me of them; the jewels are a part of my wedding portion, and I am only allowed to wear them sometimes: they are usually kept in his treasure-chamber, in a chest which has several keys, and the various persons who keep these keys meet together and agree that the jewels shall be taken out for a certain period. I have my own fixed income, on which I keep up my own women, and pay for many things which it is not usual for wives to do whose husbands are free-hearted. Come and see my sleeping apartment, which I have adorned to my own taste."

She lifted a striped hanging, and we entered a beautiful room, rather low in the roof, which was vaulted, and supported on short pillars richly carved, built into the wall. The spaces between the pillars were filled up with coloured French engravings of female figures in plain gilt frames, and underneath each was suspended some gold or silver filagree ornament. Under two of them were two small daggers of the finest workmanship, beautifully mounted, and fastened to a handsome gold waist-chain of considerable value.

"These are singular ornaments for a lady's bed-room," I observed.

"Not at all so to women of my tribe," replied she: "we all wear daggers, and know how to use them in our own defence."

I could then observe that she wore one under the shawl-girdle. Her bed was made in the French style; the hangings were of fine worked muslin and bright blue silk; the bed-cover, quilted crimson satin; and a Persian carpet over part of the floor, which was of marble. There were many small richly ornamented recesses, each containing a vase or bottle of porcelain or glass gilt. There were, however, no external windows; the light came from numerous small apertures above the arches, for they could scarcely be called windows, though they were glazed.

The lady then called me to see what was going on in the street, through a long narrow loop-hole which diverged as it extended downwards. We could see a little of the traffic in the street.

"This," she said, "is all I see of the world. I long to know the histories of those who pass by, to help the poor and sick I see crawling along, to do good to all; but here I am, useless in the world and idle: now that I have finished decorating this room, I look over these French pictures and feel tired of them all. If I could make such pictures as you do, of animals and flowers, it would take up my time and I should feel less weary."

I told her I would willingly come if we were likely to remain at Agra, but it was almost certain we should leave it in a very short time; and then I proposed bidding her farewell, as I had another child at home, an infant, from whom I could not stay for many hours.

"Oh happy and fortunate among women, why did you not bring this little diamond with the others? I have prepared a present for you, which I hope you will keep, and remember me. The sâit begrudged my giving you anything; and, after many entreaties, he allowed me only to purchase an embroidered Delhi scarf, instead of a cashmere shawl. I am almost ashamed to offer it you."

So saying, she beckoned to her women, who brought the scarf on a tray, with three pieces of gold. The scarf was thrown over my shoulders, and the pieces of gold were placed in the hands of the children. "The sâit, my lord, wanted me to give them silver, but at length consented to give gold. I owe him money already, and he only advances me what he thinks proper."

Seven trays of fruits and sweetmeats, sugarcandy, almonds, raisins, and dates were then presented to me, which I accepted in the usual manner; we then went to the garden and examined the fountain, flowers, and ornamented niches, which once had contained vases, but they had been removed owing to the injuries they had received from the monkeys, which swarm in these cities as cats do on our roofs. Lingered to the last moment, the lady left me at the top of the stair; the presents, covered with gay-looking handkerchiefs, were carried beside us; and, on reaching my own quiet happy home, I returned thanks to the Almighty for the many blessings bestowed on me. The condition of this lady gave me abundant matter for reflection. Here was truly an "imprisoned soul," and how could she be freed? Ignorance and prejudice fettered her aspirations after virtue and knowledge, as completely as if she had been a captive in chains.

A few days after this we left Agra, never to return there. On my return to India, after some

years' residence in England, I felt a strong desire to obtain some influence over the imprisoned souls of my own sex; and, knowing no other method to gain access to them, I asked various medical gentlemen who attended the families of natives to effect an introduction, but they invariably refused. Some of them considered my ideas absurd; and others intimated that any attempt to interfere with the prejudices of the natives would be considered a breach of confidence, prove detrimental to the medical profession, and do no good to the cause I had so much at heart. The opportunity passed away, and I have often felt a degree of compunction that I had done no more to improve the precious moments placed within my power.

#### SEVENTEEN HUNDRED AND FIFTY-FIVE.

SOME commentators on Old Testament history have supposed that the extraordinary length of life vouchsafed to the early patriarchs was a providential arrangement, to preserve the memory of events and revelations in ages that owned neither scholars nor records. The rising generation might then converse with their forefathers. The household of his time might meet, by hearth and harvest-field, the living witnesses of facts which had occurred centuries before he was born, and that in such numbers as left no room for doubt regarding their testimony. The history and aspect of the primeval world was thus made clearer and more familiar to its inhabitants, who came the latest by a thousand years, than those of barely a century ago can ever be to us, with all the recording apparatus of pencil, pen, and press.

We have read of its historical events, and perhaps seen the portraits of its reigning sovereigns or notables; but how the world went in general, how England in particular looked, and thought, and conducted herself, in home and street and highway, is not to be learned from these. Were there one living among us who accurately remembered a hundred years ago, and could intelligently describe the life and manners of that period, what a thorough acquaintance should we have with our ancestors! and how interesting, as well as instructive, would it be to behold their times from the vantage-ground of our own! This reflection occurred to us while accidentally turning over the volume of a magazine for 1755. The periodical is still in existence, having well maintained its name and character through the change and progress of sundry generations; but, in the days referred to, it seems to have united the characteristics of a newspaper and a magazine, and glancing through its pages is like stepping out of our own busy modern London, and finding one's-self all at once among our great-grandfathers.

They are like us, but have a slow-going old-fashioned air about them. We hear the rustle of silken sarks, and see the flow of periwigs. The courtesy is formal, the gaiety is rude, the general knowledge is limited; and the great mass below the rank of gentleman or scholar are unmentioned and unthought-of as the inferior creation. In one page, George the Second is congratulated on his return from a visit to Hanover. In another, a

student at Oxford is condemned to ask pardon of his college, on his knees, for drinking the health of king James; and a third piece of news is, that the estates of certain lords engaged in the late rebellion, Cameron of Lochiel, Macdonald of Glen-garry, Simon Fraser, Lord Lovat, etc., are vested unalienably in the crown.

Among these vestiges of Jacobite times appear the seeds of present events. In the foreign intelligence of January, 1755, we read, that her imperial majesty, Elizabeth, czarina of all the Russias, "intends to found an university at Moscow, and has ordered an additional number of public schools to be opened in all the great cities of her dominions; and, it being resolved to make a considerable augmentation in the land and sea forces of her empire, every hundredth man will be enlisted, which will form an additional body of 66,145 men."

The news from China sounds still more prophetic, considering the half-religious, half-political strife which now disturbs that ancient empire. "The emperor has renewed all his predecessors' edicts in favour of the Christians. He is building, at his own expense, a magnificent church for them at Pekin, and gives room to hope that he will himself turn Christian. Besides the European missionaries, there are 4000 native priests in China, and the number of professing Christians in its different provinces amount to 69,328."

Turkey occupied a very different position among the nations in those days. We are told of a new sultan, Osman III, being begirt with the scymetar of the empire—a ceremony equivalent to coronation; of his liberal distribution of money among the janizaries; and that Mr. Porter, the British ambassador, who came to compliment him on his accession, "was received with great politeness, assured of his master's high regard for the king of Great Britain, and his disinclination to disturb the tranquillity of the Christian powers."

There is war, nevertheless, as in our own day; but its theatre is the west, and the belligerents are France and England, disputing the possession of North America. We have full accounts of Indian gatherings, and addresses to their great father, George, with the presentation of wampum belts to the English governors. We have brief descriptions of the New England states, as "flourishing colonies, rich in corn and cattle, but little known to the most part of Britain." There is a law passed, by the New York House of Assembly, to cut off the ears of any shipmaster known to trade with Saint Louis, and news of colonial warfare from the Saint Lawrence to the Mississippi. Letters of marque and privateers are spoken of as common things at the port of London, and the "Magazine" tells its readers, quite in a matter-of-course fashion, "To-day the press began in the river, and 500 were carried off."

The assize intelligence is regularly given, with long lists of capital convictions, for every shade of crime, from shop-lifting to murder. Among the minor offences, William Arundel is convicted of taking down the heads of two rebels from Mickle-gate-bar in York, and sentenced to pay five pounds, to be imprisoned two years, and to find sureties, in 200*l.* penalty, for his good behaviour for two years more.

The state lottery is in full operation, and prosecutions for frauds connected with it are of everyday occurrence. The thief-catcher is busy, making, as well as discovering, victims for the law; and the highway robber is a thing to be expected in travelling. The improvements reported serve to show the level of the times. His majesty gives his assent to acts for cleansing and lighting the streets of Leeds, and for establishing a night watch in Bristol. While his majesty's postmaster-general is pleased to order, "that letters shall for the future be conveyed six days in every week instead of three days, as at present, between London and a number of towns, large and small, including Manchester, Liverpool, and Oxford."

The building of Blackfriars-bridge and the opening of the New-road between Paddington and Islington are subjects of civic agitation; and letters from eye-witnesses describe the destruction of Lisbon. There are theories and speculations on the cause of that great earthquake, which seems to have been felt as far as Norway and in the lakes and rivers of England. One is that, according to ancient tradition, the earth below the whole peninsula is hollowed into boundless caverns, into which the sea doubtless found its way.

The finery of the age shines forth in notices of state balls and their company. We hear of the prince of Wales, afterwards George III, in "a pink satin waistcoat and a diamond belt;" and of a noble lady who wore a robe covered with stars made of brilliants, which was said to cost a hundred thousand. It also appears that the dinner hour for ultra-fashionables is four o'clock; that the London season begins about Shrove Tuesday; and Vauxhall Gardens is the most exclusive scene of public amusement.

Most of the deaths and marriages have the sum of the bride's dowry, or the deceased's property, regularly advertised; and lady Betty and the honourable Miss Nancy, homely as they may sound, are not only genteel but aristocratic names. There is talk of an intended expedition to discover the north-west passage. The East Indian trade is chiefly engrossed by French and Portuguese colonies. Nobody has yet dreamt of Australia; and the glorious uncertainty of olden times still hangs about the coasts of the Pacific. There is a French trader's narrative, on which it is said the South-sea scheme was founded, telling of a country west of the Mississippi, where they build temples with golden wedges, the size and shape of bricks, and carry on a lucrative commerce with Japan by caravans of oxen.

Research is nevertheless abroad, but chiefly in the antiquarian department. There are descriptions of Roman remains at Bath, and large accounts of the newly discovered city of Herculanum; while the name of Richard Rawlinson, mentioned among the chief promoters of archæology, brings to one's remembrance the celebrated Colonel of Cunic inscriptions known to our own day.

In the literary department, there are lyrics concerning Damon and Phillida, nymphs and shepherds. Poems on such subjects as "Myra's retirement to the country;" "To a young lady, on seeing her smile;" and "to Miss, on hearing that she was offended." Long-winded tales with

tolerable morals, and largely made up of conversations about the polite world. Colley Cibber is writing birth-day odes, in which Mars figures conspicuously, and the king of England is denominated Cæsar. Mr. Garrick is speaking coarse enough prologues. There is reviewed a new tragedy written by M. de Voltaire, and a translated ode to death by the king of Prussia, which might prove that Frederic the Great was neither an earnest thinker nor a poet. Works of more permanent interest also appear. We have a notice of "Hervy's Meditations among the Tombs;" and "some account of a dictionary of the English language by Samuel Johnson, A.M., in two vols. folio." Another page tells us that the university of Oxford has just conferred the degree of LL.D. on Mr. Samuel Johnson; and, having read Boswell, we know that the outward struggles of the lexicographer's life are over. His dictionary was the great work of 1755; and we closed the volume, which had shown us so faithfully the passing of that long-departed year, with a sort of veneration for the vitality of books.

When the successive numbers of that old magazine were looked for, in London mansion and country manor-house, with an expectation all unknown to these days of steam-presses and weeklies, the seven years' war was about to begin, Maria Theresa was empress queen in Vienna, Poland was still counted among the nations, and Louis the Fifteenth was keeping as corrupt a court as ever France had seen, disturbed by nothing but the men of the encyclopedia. Since then the revolutions, and wars, and progress, which filled the century between that year and the present, have come; the world has fulfilled its destiny for another hundred years; but the life and thought of 1755 remain treasured in the silent pages, so that he who reads may see the advance of civilization and count our country's gains for a century. They rise before us in the form of commerce increased tenfold, scientific discoveries and mechanical inventions applied to nearly all the wants of man, less sanguinary yet more efficient laws, general education, with a consequent refinement of manners, and all the reformatory institutions that strive with social ills. These are some of the opportunities and privileges wherein we excel our ancestors; but for them all, is not every one of us more accountable to the Master who says, "Occupy till I come?" Kings and prophets and righteous men have, in some respects, desired to see the things which we see, and have not seen them; but according to our advantages must our judgment be; and no sounder lesson can be gathered from a look on the other side of the century.

#### A THOUGHT FOR THE YOUNG.

WE see a great deal of misery in the world, but much of it men bring upon themselves by their own behaviour, which they might have foreseen and avoided. The circumstances of these natural punishments, particularly deserving our attention, are such as these: that oftentimes they follow, or are inflicted in consequence of actions which procure many present advantages, and are accompanied with much present pleasure; for instance, sickness

or untimely death is the consequence of intemperance, though accompanied with the highest mirth and jollity: that these punishments are often much greater than the advantages or pleasures obtained by the actions of which they are the punishments or consequences: that they are often delayed a great while, sometimes even till long after the actions occasioning them are forgot; so that the constitution of nature is such, that delay of punishment is no sort nor degree of presumption of final impunity: that, after such delay, these natural punishments or miseries often come, not by degrees, but suddenly with violence, and at once. Though youth may be alleged as an excuse for rashness and folly, as being naturally thoughtless, and not clearly foreseeing all the consequences of being untractable and profligate; this does not hinder but that these consequences follow, and are grievously felt throughout the whole course of mature life. Habits contracted even in that age are often utter ruin; and men's success in the world, not only in the common sense of worldly success, but their real happiness and misery, depend in a great degree, and in various ways, upon the manner in which they pass their youth; which consequences they, for the most part, neglect to consider, and perhaps seldom can properly be said to believe beforehand. It requires also to be mentioned that, in numberless cases, the natural course of things affords us opportunities for procuring advantages to ourselves at certain times, which we cannot procure when we will; nor ever recall the opportunities if we have neglected them. Indeed the general course of nature is an example of this. If, during the opportunities of youth, persons are indocile and self-willed, they inevitably suffer in their future life, for want of those acquirements which they neglected the natural season of attaining. If the husbandman lets his seed-time pass without sowing, the whole year is lost to him beyond recovery.

—*Butler's Analogy.*

#### THE GREAT PROBLEM.

A YOUNG man who had graduated at one of the first colleges in America, and was celebrated for his literary attainments, particularly his knowledge of mathematics, settled in a village where a faithful minister of the gospel was stationed. It was not long before the clergyman met with him in one of his evening walks, and after some conversation, as they were about to part, addressed him as follows:—"I have heard you are celebrated for your mathematical skill; I have a problem which I wish you to solve." "What is it?" eagerly inquired the young man. The clergyman answered, with a solemn tone of voice, "What shall it profit a man, if he should gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" The youth returned home, and endeavoured to shake off the impression fastened on him by the problem proposed to him, but in vain. In the giddy round of pleasure, in his business, and in his studies, the question still forcibly returned to him, "What shall it profit a man, if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" It finally resulted in his conversion, and he became an able advocate and preacher of that gospel which he once rejected.